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HARVARD
COLLEGE
LIBRARY



FROM THE
Subscription Fund

BEGUN IN 1858

LIBRARY EFFICIENCY TEST

ARRANGED BY
JULIA A. ROBINSON

SECRETARY IOWA LIBRARY COMMISSION

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
CHICAGO
1920

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Subscription fund

LIBRARY EFFICIENCY TEST

INTRODUCTION

The test here offered is not intended as a questionnaire for reply and return to the State Library Commission, but is suggested as a method by which a library board may be able to examine its library and reach some conclusion as to whether it is paying sufficient dividends upon the investment made by the donors of the building and the taxpayers who are supporting it.

The value of this test will depend upon the amount of information possessed by the library board on library buildings, library administration and library matters in general, and can be used to best advantage in conference with a librarian conversant with these subjects.

Where figures are not called for, it is suggested that a check mark (V) be used for an affirmative answer, a cross (+) for a negative and a (—) for a question which does not apply, leaving blank those which are not understood and can perhaps be filled later.

The measure of the efficiency of any library must be the measure of its usefulness, all else being plant and machinery and operators contributing to that end. Much of the usefulness of a library cannot be measured in figures but circulation is generally taken as the best method of showing the use of a library.

By it the increase or decrease in the books leaving the library can be shown as well as the per capita of books read by the population of the town. The latter furnishes a means of comparison between libraries, but this comparison is only useful for towns of the same size, as the per capita increases with a decrease in the size of a town. The same is true of the per capita income and the volumes per capita in the book collection. At the end is printed a "Summary" which has been found useful when there was not time for the full test.

JULIA A. ROBINSON.

LIBRARY EFFICIENCY TEST

EFFICIENCY

Community..... Population..... Nature of Population.....
Circulation of library: 19.....,, 19....., Increase.....
Decrease.....

Per capita of population..... Per book..... Fiction per cent.....
Comparison with towns in state of same size.....

Borrowers: 19.....,, 19....., Increase.....

When was last re-registration of borrowers made.....

Any classes of population not using library.....

Any part of town not covered.....

Reference work: Women's clubs..... Schools..... Men..... General.....
Increase Decrease

Children's work:

Circulation: 19.....,, 19....., Increase..... Decrease.....

Borrowers: 19.....,, 19....., Increase..... Decrease.....

Per cent of school children using library.....

School work:

Co-operation with teachers.....

School work.....

Recreational reading.....

School credits for reading from library.....

Instruction in use of library.....

School library..... Owned and operated by school.....

By library board..... In co-operation.....

Teachers' privileges in use of library.....

Story Hour:

Time..... By whom..... Attendance.....

In library..... In schools.....

Miscellaneous subjects..... Connected..... Correlated with school work.....

Use of library as a community social center:

Use of rooms in library building:

Meetings by organizations..... How many.....

Meetings arranged by library.....

Lectures..... Musical entertainments.....

Club meetings..... Reading aloud in library.....

Reception to teachers..... For foreigners.....

Exhibits.....

Community activities.....

Knowledge and standing of the library in the community.....

Additional.....

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

PLANT, MACHINERY, AND OPERATORS

BUILDING

No library building:

Rented rooms..... Rooms in city or county building.....
Adequate Satisfactory
Prospects for a building.....
Efforts being made to secure.....
When..... Gift of whom..... Tax.....
Combination with community house..... Has it been suggested or considered.....

Separate building:

Date of erection..... Source of building fund.....
Carnegie Corporation..... Other donor..... Tax.....
Planning: Did secretary of the State Library Commission see plans before erection?.....
Main floor:
Reading room Children's room
Undivided Stacks Partitions
Librarian's room—Partitions Shelving None.....
Allowing supervision of library.....
Shelving for books..... Closet for supplies.....
Lavatory Clothes hooks..... Door and lock.....
Vestibule: Size..... Use.....
Stairways to basement: Well placed..... How many.....
Basement: How many entrances.....
Auditorium..... Furnished..... By whom..... Use.....
Store room for books and magazines..... For janitor.....
Furnace and boiler room..... Toilets..... Open..... Locked.....
Other rooms..... Use.....
Ventilation and heat..... Satisfactory.....
Desirable improvements.....

Furniture:

Loan desk..... Give entire supervision.....
Card drawers Proper shape and dimensions.....
Money drawer..... Lock..... Work shelf..... Book space.....
Seat..... Space for its comfortable use.....
Defects.....
Can they be remedied.....
Tables and chairs..... Low table and chairs.....
Enough..... Too many.....
Floors: Covered entirely..... Partially.....
Cork carpet..... Well laid..... Well cared for.....
Shelving: Adequate..... Over 7 feet high..... Room for expansion.....
Too deep..... Shelves adjustable.....
Wall..... Floor stacks.....
Windows: High..... Low..... Lock..... Shades..... Screens.....
How open..... Storm windows.....
Roof: Leak..... Repaired..... Satisfactory.....
Lighting..... Adequate.....
Indirect..... Semi-indirect.....
Switches..... Where..... One at door.....

Ventilation: Any provision for.....Satisfactory.....
Heat: Kind.....Satisfactory.....
Not sufficient.....Cause.....Can it be remedied.....
Windows admit drafts.....Storm windows.....

Equipment:

Magazine rack—Make.....Satisfactory.....
Catalog cabinet: Sufficient for needs.....Provision for expansion.....
Dictionary rack.....
Book display case.....Bulletin board adult.....Children.....
Newspaper rack.....Shelf labels, directions, etc.....

Walls:

Decoration.....Fresh.....Harmonious.....Needed.....
Reflect or absorb light.....

Miscellaneous:

Pictures.....Source.....Too many.....Artistic.....
Plants and flowers.....Cared for.....
Fund for purchase.....Clock.....
Telephone: Donated.....Paid for.....Use.....Where located.....

Condition of building and furnishings:

Good repair.....Needing repair.....Orderly.....Neat.....
Floor clean.....How often cleaned.....By whom.....
Shelves, tables and chairs dusted.....By whom.....
Books even and upright on shelves.....Book supports used.....
Books and magazines in order.....Windows clean.....Curtains even.....
Librarian's desk orderly on top and underneath.....
Vestibule and steps swept and clean.....Glass in doors clean.....
Signs: On building.....Elsewhere.....

Outside:

In summer:
Lawn well kept.....Grass cut.....No weeds.....
Shade trees.....Shrubbery.....Vines.....Flowers.....
All well cared for.....By whom.....
All the year:
Walks and steps clean.....

BOOK COLLECTION

Size: Number of volumes.....Volumes per capita of population.....
Vols. added in 19.....Vols. withdrawn in 19.....
Missing.....Lost.....Where.....Worn.....
Vols. rebound 19.....Vols. repaired in library.....
Inventory: When last taken.....How often taken.....
Suitability: All useful.....Large amount of dead wood.....
In beginning: New books.....Donations.....
Old or poor editions.....Out of date.....Useless titles.....
Any classes weak.....Any classes overbalanced.....
Fiction: Well selected.....Standards in good editions.....
Recent fiction.....Better class.....
Large per cent of light weight.....

Non-fiction: Well selected..... Attractive editions.....
 Popular presentations..... Scholarly presentations.....
 Authoritative: Accurate..... All phases.....
 Fill needs of community.....
 Public documents: Too many..... Taking needed space..... Enough.....
 Reference books: Up-to-date..... Filling needs.....
 Juvenile: Reference..... Picture..... Easy..... Table.....
 Restricted..... What is done about such books.....
 Foreign books..... Called for.....

Condition:

Generally good..... Many badly worn.....
 How many should be withdrawn..... Repaired..... Rebound.....
 Replaced..... Continued in circulation.....
 Selection: By whom:—Librarian..... Book committee.....
 Librarian and Book Committee.....

Sources:

Lists used.....
 Is Booklist used..... Are wants of community consulted.....
 How known.....
 Mistakes often made..... How remedied.....
 Does library own U. S. Catalogue.....
 Subscribe for Cumulative Book Index.....
 Selections made to suit bookish trustees.....
 How is list made up.....
 Popular copyrights used..... Care in selection of editions.....
 Proportion of fiction..... Recent fiction..... Non-fiction.....
 Adult books..... Children's books.....
 Use made of the Library Commission: In borrowing books.....
 For book lists..... Advice in book selection.....
 Purchase: How often..... From whom: local dealer.....
 Large dealer..... Other sources..... Agent.....
 Rent collection: No. of volumes..... Source of fund.....
 Does it duplicate general collection..... Use..... Time.....
 Periodicals: No. subscribed for..... No. donated.....
 No. bound..... Binding more than needed for reference work.....
 Subscribe for too many women's magazines..... Men's.....
 Story..... Current events..... Literary..... Educational.....
 Technical..... Children's.....
 Do they circulate.....
 Library periodical taken.....
 Read by librarian..... By trustees.....
 Publication of State Library Commission read by librarian.....
 By trustees..... Preserved..... Bound.....
 Referred to.....
 Reader's Guide subscribed for..... Donated..... Used.....
 Newspapers:
 No. town papers kept..... How.....
 Pamphlets:
 How cared for..... How much used.....

LOCAL HISTORY MATERIAL

Any collection being made.....
 Co-operation with County Historical Society.....

FINANCES

Income:

Amount from city tax.....Levy.....Per capita pop.....
 Amount from Rural Extension.....No. of townships.....Levy each.....
 From other sources.....Total income.....
 Increase in 19.....Decrease.....Why.....
 Has income increased with growth of library work.....
 With increase for other city departments.....
 Does the making of the levy receive the attention of board.....
 Are Carnegie conditions met (if Carnegie building).....
 Petty cash.....How handled.....How used.....
 Is any fund at librarian's disposal.....

Expenditures:

Total for 19.....
 Balance.....Large enough to be a menace.....
 Budget used.....
 Heat: Amount \$.....Per cent of total.....
 Hot water.....Steam.....Hot air.....Stoves.....
 Plant adequate.....Well run.....
 Costing too much.....
 Could it be reduced by change in furnace.....
 Could it be reduced by change in building.....
 Could it be reduced by change in janitor.....
 Light: Amount \$.....per cent of total.....
 Costing too much.....Could it be reduced by change in fixtures.....
 Do walls and window shades reflect light.....or absorb.....
 Repairs and improvements: Amount \$.....Per cent of total.....
 Needed.....Being made.....
 Printing: Amount \$.....Per cent of total.....
 What.....Pay too much.....
 Supplies: Amount \$.....Per cent of total.....
 Enough purchased for needs of library.....
 Insurance: Being kept up.....Does it take into account increase in values.....
 Books: Amount \$.....Per cent of total.....
 Using best dealer.....Getting best prices.....
 Does amount expended for books replace loss from wear of circulation.....
 Are reenforced bindings bought.....
 Binding: Amount \$.....Per cent of total.....
 Rebinding books.....Periodicals.....
 By whom done.....Well done.....
 Doing enough.....Too much.....
 Periodicals: List too large.....Use agents.....
 Salaries: Total \$.....Per cent of income.....

How do salaries compare with other libraries of same size

How do they compare with teachers' salaries in your town

Librarian: \$.....

Assistants:

Children's Librarian \$.....
Cataloger \$.....
Reference Librarian \$.....
Branch Librarian \$.....
Assistant \$.....
Assistant \$.....
Assistant \$.....
Assistant \$.....
Janitor \$.....

EXTENSION

Outside agencies: Branches..... Stations.....
School deposits..... Co-operation on part of school.....
In charge of school people..... Of library assistants.....
Rural extension..... No. of townships..... Could more be secured.....
Has any attempt been made to secure them.....
Would they not add to income of library..... Would they not extend its usefulness.....
No. of country borrowers..... Charge..... Encouraged.....
Use of library by country pupils in town schools.....
Factory work

ORGANIZATION

Loan system: Pockets..... Book cards..... Readers' cards.....
Application cards..... Guarantor required..... Why.....
Borrowers' record..... Form.....
Re-registration: How often..... Method.....
Dating slips used..... Blank..... Printed.....
No. of volumes loaned on one card: Fiction..... Non-fiction.....
Fines per day..... Notices sent..... How often.....
Penalty How is fund used.....
Seven-day books..... Renewed.....
Reserve books: Fiction..... Non-fiction..... Telephone..... Post Card.....

Records:

Accession book By whom begun.....
Withdrawal book..... By whom begun.....
Shelf list..... By whom begun.....
Kept up
Catalog..... By whom begun.....
Kept up
Library classified according to D. C..... By whom.....
Ownership stamp: Kind.....
Book labels: Fiction..... Non-fiction.....
White ink..... Denison.....
Correspondence receive attention..... How filed.....
Too much red tape..... Too little..... Records kept up.....

Has annual report for 19..... been sent?

To City Council.....

To Library Commission.....

Filed in library.....

If not, why not.....

Daily report kept by classes.....

Why.....

Are Commission report blanks used.....

Has library had assistance of a Commission organizer.....

Who.....

When.....

Are her services needed again.....

Does library own a typewriter.....

Make.....

New.....

HOURS OF OPENING

What week days..... Hours: Mornings..... Afternoons..... Evenings.....

Librarian always in charge.....

Assistant.....

Could hours be shortened without loss to the community.....

Could they be lengthened and increase usefulness of library.....

Sunday..... Who in charge.....

Holidays.....

Is there any difficulty with discipline.....

PUBLICITY

Use of newspapers..... Other printed matter.....

Bulletin boards: Outside.....

Inside.....

Display in stores.....

Store windows.....

Exhibits.....

Other methods.....

Lantern slides, "movies".....

Signs: Where.....

Well placed.....

More needed.....

Cards in hotels, etc.....

TRUSTEES

Number..... Interested..... Informed on library work.....

Visit library frequently.....

Use library.....

Visit other libraries.....

Read library literature.....

Attend library meetings: State.....

District.....

Expenses paid to meetings.....

Organized under By-laws suggested for public libraries.....

Work done by all.....

By few.....

By Committees.....

Board meetings held regularly.....

Attendance.....

Attended by librarian.....

Is she expected.....

Librarian secretary of board.....

Reports called for from Committees.....

From librarian.....

Elections held annually.....

Committees appointed annually.....

Part of board in management of library.....

Part of librarian.....

STAFF

Librarian:

Experience.....

Length of service.....

Preparation:

General education.....

High School.....

College.....

Other.....

Library School training:

Regular Library School.....

What.....

Summer School course.....

What.....

General Information.....

Knowledge of books.....

Reading: Professional.....

Personal.....

Comparison with teachers.....

Other previous occupation or preparation.....

Personality:

Pleasing.....Good mixer.....Meet people well.....Dignified.....
Desire to serve.....Cordial.....High ideals.....Industrious.....
Energetic.....Alert.....Original.....Forceful.....Tactful.....
Disciplinarian.....Conscientious.....Progressive.....Neat.....
Publicity instinct.....Interested.....Systematic.....
Businesslike.....
Health.....
Weak points.....Strong points.....
Attitude: Toward board.....Toward public.....
Toward work.....Toward assistants.....
Relations to janitor: Harmonious.....Friction.....Cause.....
Relations with staff: Harmonious.....Friction.....Cause.....
Attention to building: Orderly.....Disorderly.....Neat.....
Part in community life.....Outside interests.....
Young.....Middle-aged.....Married.....Physical handicaps.....
Employed for ability.....Because cheap.....Because available.....
Because needy.....
Hours of employment.....Compared with teachers.....
Hours of work outside library hours.....
Other employment.....
Assistant or substitute available when needed.....By whom paid.....
Vacation: Length.....With pay.....
Library meetings: Expenses paid to District.....To State.....
Thru whom secured: Library Commission.....Otherwise.....
Salary.....Increase since employment.....
Could her equal be secured for the same salary.....
Could she get more elsewhere.....

Assistants: How many.....Apprentices.....

Children's Librarian:

Experience.....Length of service.....
Preparation.....
General education.....
Library School training.....
Previous occupation or preparation.....
Personality.....
Weak points.....Strong points.....

Cataloger:

Experience.....Length of service.....
Preparation.....
General education.....
Library School training.....
Previous occupation or preparation.....
Personality.....
Weak points.....Strong points.....

Reference Librarian:

Experience Length of service.....
Preparation.....
 General education.....
 Library School training.....
 Previous occupation or preparation.....
Personality.....
Weak points..... Strong points

Branch Librarian:

Experience Length of service.....
Preparation.....
 General education.....
 Library School training.....
 Previous occupation or preparation.....
Personality.....
Weak points..... Strong points

General Assistants:

How many.....
Experience Length of service.....
Preparation..... Book background.....
Competent Promising.....

Janitor:

Competent..... Officious..... Willing.....
Interested Employed for ability.....
Because cheap..... Because needy.....
Paid by library board..... By librarian.....
Duties: Fires..... Walks..... Sweeping..... Cleaning.....
 Dusting books..... Miscellaneous

EFFICIENCY OF A LIBRARY

Summary

Measured by

Circulation—generally used as basis, but not conclusive.....

Borrowers—all classes and all parts of town covered.....

Reference work.....

With schools.....Women's Clubs.....General.....

Use of reading room.....

Children's work.....

CirculationBorrowersSchool work.....Story hour.....

Use of library as community center.....

Community activities.....

Affected by

1. Plant—building and equipment

Suitability

Attractiveness

Equipment

Location

Condition

Care

2. Organization and administration

Records

Charging system

Hours of opening

Rules and regulations

Red tape—too much—too little

3. Book collection

Size

Selection

Suitability

Condition

Arrangement and display

Periodicals and newspapers

Pamphlets

4. Operators

Librarian

Efficiency

Interest

Intelligence and education

Standards and ideals

Personality

Assistants

Number

Efficiency

Interest

Personality

Salaries sufficient to secure and keep competent people

5. Managers—Trustees

Interest in, and attention to library

Information on library matters

Conservatism

Standards and ideals

Attitude toward librarian

Financial support

Adequate

Wisely expended

Extension

Rural

Branches—stations—direct

City

Branches—stations—school collections

Publicity

Sign on building

Use of newspapers

Displays in library and elsewhere

Other use of print

Librarian's standing in community

This book should be returned to
the Library on or before the last date
stamped below.

A fine of five cents a day is incurred
by retaining it beyond the specified
time.

Please return promptly.

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Library efficiency test,
Widener Library

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